



The HPD News

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A Message From Your Investigative Chiefs

Criminal Investigations Command

The Criminal Investigations Command has citywide responsibility for delivering a diverse array of specialized investigative police services.

The Auto Theft Division is responsible for investigating auto theft and auto parts related cases and the regulation of automotive businesses within Houston.

The Burglary and Theft Division has primary responsibility for follow-up investigations of crimes related to the unauthorized entry of a building or habitation with the intent to commit a felony or theft. Other offenses investigated include theft, criminal mischief, and criminal trespass.

The Homicide Division is responsible for investigating all homicide-related offenses including the scene investigation of all homicides, officer-involved shootings, and questionable death incidents where foul play is suspected. Homicide is also responsible for the investigation of missing persons where criminal activity is suspected and in-progress kidnappings.

The Juvenile Division investigates crimes in which a juvenile is suspected of being the perpetrator or cases involving juvenile runaways, missing persons, physical and sexual abuse of a child, or serious child neglect.

The Robbery Division is responsible for conducting investigations concerning all penal code classifications of robbery offenses as well as theft from persons and extortion cases. These activities may be in the form of initial, follow-up, or proactive investigations.

The Criminal Investigations Command consists of

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Assistant Chief J.R. Jones, Criminal Investigations Command

Special Investigations Command

The divisions that make up the Special Investigations Command work closely with federal, county, and state agencies while participating in cooperative inter-agency task force operations.

The Major Offenders Division investigates major thefts and other specialized crimes such as police impersonations, cargo thefts,

swindle operations, and computer crimes. The division is actively involved in a number of inter-agency task forces with the FBI and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. Major Offenders also tracks the Top 10 Sex Offenders.

The Narcotics Division is responsible for curbing illegal drug activity in Houston. It is also involved in several federal, state, and local inter-agency task forces and works closely with U.S. Customs in monitoring money laundering and international drug trafficking operations.

The Criminal Intelligence Division (CID) is organized into three units. The Citywide Gang Unit researches and analyzes gang information and operates a street gang squad. The Special Investigations Unit provides dignitary protection, monitors organized crime activity, and participates in a Terrorism Task Force. The Technical Equipment Unit provides specialized surveillance equipment to support other divisions.

The Vice Division is made up of three squads that enforce laws regulating sexually-oriented businesses (SOBs) and gambling operations. The SOB/Pornography Squad monitors adult bookstores, topless and nude



Assistant Chief G.S. Stewart, Special Investigations Command

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Chief's Column

The tragic events of September 11, 2001, will never be forgotten by any of us. As a result of those attacks, there is a renewed focus on preparedness for biological and chemical terrorism in the United States.

In 1999, all Houston police officers were given in-service training regarding biological and chemical weapons/exposures. The training was entitled "Weapons of Mass Destruction." All officers were not only given historical information about hazardous material situations that have been encountered in the past, but were also instructed in the proper procedures and responsibilities that are required by the first responder to a hazardous material incident. Additionally, officers were instructed in safety techniques that are needed for responding officers,

medical personnel, and victims who may have come in contact with chemical, biological, or other toxic substances at a location requiring a hazardous material response.

HPD is providing a refresher video outlining procedures for handling a hazardous material situation. The video will remind officers of the critical need to be aware of the dangers present when responding to a call and remind them that their safety is the first priority. If the first responding officer falls victim to a chemical or biological agent, then he or she will be unable to provide valuable information to the dispatcher who will be working to coordinate an overall response to the event. Additionally, that officer will be unable to assist citizens who have been exposed, prevent further exposures, and direct other officers also responding to the scene. Copies of

the video will be available to each division, and every officer is encouraged to view it.

In addition to the video, HPD has purchased suits and masks designed to protect officers assigned to handle a hazardous material situation. This equipment will be provided to units in accordance with the responsibilities outlined in our hazardous materials training.

The Command Staff is constantly monitoring the department's ability to respond to hazardous material as well as other critical incidents. If you have any questions or suggestions regarding this matter, please advise your supervisor immediately or address written correspondence via your chain of command.



Training Conference for Civilian Employees

On Friday, November 9, 2001, HPD will convene the sixth annual Civilian Personnel Training Conference at the L. D. Morrison Police Training Academy. The agenda for this year provides a varied amount of interesting and topical discussions. For example, participants can learn how to become an effective speaker, how to buy a home on a

city salary, parenting skills, handling stress, and even how to cope if diagnosed with cancer.

Ms. Jeanne Pressler, conference coordinator, promises this year's conference will be the best ever. "Providing enlightening and informative presentations has been the goal of the coordinating committee," said Ms. Pressler, "and this

year's participants will not be disappointed with the curriculum."

Between 30 and 40 volunteers throughout the department help coordinate and serve as presenters for this event each year. Many of the presenters come from outside HPD and several have repeated in this role as a result of requests from participants of the conference.

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765 police officers, support personnel, supervisors, and managers who take pride in working closely with other departmental units and the community.

I would like to thank all of the men and women assigned to the Criminal Investigations Command. Because of your hard work, the city of Houston is one of the safest cities in America. Keep up the great work!

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dance clubs, and adult arcades. The Prostitution Squad focuses on escort services and massage parlor-style operations that are fronts for prostitution. The Gambling Squad targets illegal gambling operations and locations that operate illegal gaming devices.

I want to thank the 437 dedicated classified and civilian personnel of the Special Investigations Command who are making a positive impact in today's society.

Terror Hits Home For Some Of Our Fellow Workers

Officer Gregory Countie (Community Services Division) knows first hand how the first few minutes of the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, must have felt for President George W. Bush. Like the President, Officer Countie was in front of a classroom full of children when the tragic news was announced.

Within minutes after the first building collapsed, the eighth grade students in Officer Countie's D.A.R.E. class at Clear Lake Intermediate School began asking questions.

"Then, in front of their eyes, the second building collapsed and there was silence," said Officer Countie. Students looked to him for answers because he is also in the Navy Reserve and has experience as an Intelligence Analyst. Officer Countie said his failure to return to the school for awhile cre-

ated concern among the students. However, Officer Countie said when he returned he received far more hugs from 13-year-olds than he is accustomed to.

Officer Earle Farrell (Community Services Division) lived in New York from 1969 to 1982. When he moved to Houston, he left his two daughters behind along with other relatives. It took him about 24 hours to locate his daughters and confirm that they were unharmed. It took another week to locate his other relatives. "When everything is said and done, I am certain someone I know is going to be one of the fatalities," said Officer Farrell. Officer Farrell is a Major in the Army Reserve and, if activated, that means his life and studies towards a master's degree will be interrupted.

Officer Jesus Gutierrez



Photo by Patrick Sison, AP

(Command Center) was in the Gulf War where he served as an Army E-6 staff sergeant in an engineering company. "One of our missions was to clear the minefields and clear a path for the tanks," he said. Officer Gutierrez is in the Reserve National Guard in Pasadena. When he reported for drills, just four days after the attacks, he was notified that his unit had been called up for a mission.

Our Immediate Response Following Terrorist Attacks

The effects of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on Tuesday, September 11, 2001, were felt at the Houston Police Department. Within minutes of the attacks, emergency security measures were initiated at HPD.

Captain George Buenik (Special Operations) assigned officers outside several highly populated downtown office buildings including City Hall, the Houston Police Department Headquarters, the Bob Lanier Public Works Building at 611 Walker, the Federal Courthouse, Enron, Continental Airlines, Chase Tower, and Shell Oil.

Once word of the attacks spread throughout the downtown area, thousands of workers began leaving their offices creating a midday rush-hour commute.

"Fourteen SRG (Special Response Group) officers and two sergeants were called to report for traffic management," said Captain Buenik. "Milam Street backed up, but by noon there were no problems."

Six New Lieutenants Sworn In

On September 26, 2001, the Houston Police Department promoted six sergeants to the rank of lieutenant during the Promotion and Awards Ceremony held at the High School for Law Enforcement.

Pictured from left to right: Gregory J. Fremin, Southwest Patrol; Humberto Lopez, Internal Affairs Division; Shannon L. Broze, Juvenile Division; Milton W. Martin, Northeast Patrol; Anne C. Hebert, Auto Theft Division; Eric D. Hillman, Chief's Administration/Legal Services; and HPD Chief C.O. Bradford.



Y-PAC Begins Another Year Of Dialogue With Chief

Houston Police Chief C.O. Bradford will launch the fifth year of Y-PAC (Youth Police Advisory Council) on Saturday, October 20, 2001, with an orientation meeting for new members from area high schools.

Y-PAC was formed in 1997 and recognizes teenagers as a source of insightful input regarding young people and law enforcement issues. Thirty-six high school students of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds meet with Police Chief Bradford, other HPD officials, parents, and other adults to discuss current events and issues of mutual interest. Y-PAC allows students to better understand the roles that police play in society and helps create a positive relationship between young people and officers. Y-PAC meets five times during the school year.

For more information about Y-PAC, call Bonnie Hopkins in the Community Outreach Division at 713-308-9106.

Hispanic Officers of the Year Honored

The Houston Police Department's Hispanic Officer of the Year awards were presented to Officer Sylvia Drehel (Juvenile Sex Crimes Unit) and Officer Arthur Mejia (North Division).

Both officers were recognized at a luncheon on October 12, 2001.

This year marks the 21st annual Hispanic Officer of the Year Awards Ceremony. It is steered by a committee under the direction of Assistant Chief G.S. Stewart (Special Investigations Command).

The committee's objective is to recognize two Hispanic officers for their exemplary performance of police duties and to award scholarships to qualified Houston police officers.

The luncheon on October 12 was dedicated to the memory and in honor of Houston Police Officer Alberto Vasquez, who died in the line of duty on May 22, 2001.